

the consequences to us as a society, as a civilization, and what it says about a society that, under the mantle of law, allows such a procedure to take place. Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor.

Mr. PELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, during my last days in Congress, I wish to state my unequivocal support of the restoration of funds to the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. These fine agencies have sustained disproportionate and unreasonable cuts over the past 2 years, and the erosion must stop.

As coauthor of the legislation that created the endowments 31 years ago, I have felt like a proud father as both endowments have served the guiding principles upon which they were conceived. Overall, their programs have been remarkably successful. There has been overwhelming evidence of the positive impact of the arts and humanities on education, the economy, urban renewal, and cultural pride. It is important that two endowments be funded sufficiently to be able to continue their worthwhile and extremely effective endeavors to improve the quality of life for all Americans.

Mr. President, I am by no means alone today in favor of continued Federal funding for the arts and humanities. There is a strong bipartisan commitment. Earlier, Senator JEFFORDS and I circulated a letter signed by 31 Members that expressed their support of appropriations for the NEA, NEH, and IMS in fiscal year 1997 at current or slightly increased levels, and I ask that the letter be included in the RECORD. Other Members have spoken with us subsequently regarding their support.

The American public remains solidly and strongly behind Federal support for the arts and humanities. A recent Harris poll found that a 61 percent majority of Americans—to 37 percent saying “no”—would be willing to be taxed \$5 more in order to pay for Federal financial support for the arts. These people believe the arts to be important and would sorely miss them if they were not there.

In Rhode Island, the restored Humanities funding means quite literally survival for an extremely important project that provides fascinating information to all Americans, not just the residents of my State. With NEH funding, the Rhode Island Historical Society is reassembling the Papers of Nathanael Greene from over 100 libraries and collections scattered around the country, and is currently preparing the 10th of a total of 13 planned volumes. Nathanael Greene, you will recall was a Rhode Islander sent by George Wash-

ington to liberate the South—a task he accomplished with distinction. If work on the Papers stops now, it will be the history of Georgia and the Carolinas that would not be published. Interestingly, while Greene was alive, Congress promised to publish his daily letters and orders. How poignant that we fulfill this promise now.

As I enter my last days as a U.S. Senator—36 years among wonderful colleagues—I urge Congress to support the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum Services at a level where they can fulfill their potential and continue to bring American culture to all Americans. I hope to hear that the issues that are preventing the reauthorization of the programs of these agencies will be resolved amicably in the 105th Congress.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter to the chairman of the Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, June 18, 1996.

Senator SLADE GORTON,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations, Washington, DC.

DEAR SLADE: As the appropriations process for fiscal year 1997 begins in the Senate, we wanted to take a moment to share with you our strong commitment to supporting continued funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Institute for Museum Services (IMS). As you know, this issue of continued federal funding for the arts and humanities is one of great importance to us—one which was successfully resolved last year, in large part due to your leadership in working out the differences between the House and the Senate.

As you recall, last July, the Labor and Human Resource Committee passed a bill to reauthorize the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities and the Institute for Museum and Library Services—by a vote of 12-4. This strong show of bi-partisan support, we believe, demonstrates a continued sentiment on the part of the Senate to fund these agencies. Therefore, we strongly support your efforts to include appropriations for the NEA, NEH and IMS for the upcoming fiscal year and hope that we might see an increase over last fiscal year's appropriations for these agencies—enabling each one to continue the important job of making the arts and humanities more accessible to people all across our nation.

We recognize that you will face many difficult decisions in the weeks ahead, and ask only that you continue to keep in mind the positive and valuable effect that arts and humanities projects have in all of our respective States. The Senate's commitment to federal support will ensure that arts and humanities programs, activities and exhibitions will continue to be available in local communities—engaging and educating individuals of all ages—in addition to making an enormous contribution to expanding and enriching our nation's cultural heritage and artistic traditions.

We are grateful for your support of the reauthorization of the National Endowments as well as your leadership in managing the Interior Appropriations bill last year, and

look forward to working with you again this year.

Sincerely,

Jim Jeffords, John Chafee, Al Simpson, Bill Frist, Jay Rockefeller, Barbara A. Mikulski, Frank R. Lautenberg, Paul D. Wellstone, Carol Moseley-Braun, Claiborne Pell, John Glenn, —, Barbara Boxer, J. Lieberman, John Breaux, Bill Bradley, —, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Carl Levin, Bob Kerry, Wendell H. Ford, —, Charles S. Robb, Olympia J. Snowe, —, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher J. Dodd, Ron Wyden, Daniel K. Akaka, —, Thomas A. Daschle

HOW THE UNITED NATIONS BENEFITS AMERICANS: THE U.N. ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, last week, the 51st session of the U.N. General Assembly convened in New York City. To recognize the occasion, I spoke on the floor of the Senate to highlight some of the many benefits that the United Nations brings to the American public. The United Nation has furthered American national interests by working to promote peace and democracy, to protect human rights, to strengthen international stability, and to foster cooperation between states on a wide range of important issues. Today I wish to focus on one of these important issues—an area where the United Nations has made significant advances by enabling countries to work together and to find common solutions to common problems. Today I wish to discuss the unique role of the U.N. Environment Programme.

The 1972 U.N. Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm was the catalyst for the creation of the U.N. Environment Programme [or UNEP]. As a participant in those meetings, I eagerly supported the effort to integrate human development and the protection of the environment as two equally important goals to the international community. The establishment of UNEP ensured that all countries would have access to technical information and skills in order to develop and improve national environmental policy. UNEP has also served as a valuable forum for reaching international and regional consensus on laws and operational standards that reinforce cooperative efforts to achieve long-term sustainable development.

Because of its unique role within the United Nations as the only agency with the mandate to make environmental concerns the top priority, UNEP has facilitated U.S. policy initiative in the environmental field. As Secretary of State Warren Christopher noted in an address at Stanford University last April:

The environment has a profound impact on our national interests in two ways: First, environmental forces transcend borders and oceans to threaten directly the health, prosperity and jobs of American citizens. Second, addressing natural resource issues is frequently critical to achieving political and economic stability, and to pursuing our strategic goals around the world.